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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 005334

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/20/2014

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SUBJECT: DNSA HADLEY MEETING WITH EUROPEAN COMMISSION
PRESIDENT MANUEL JOSE DURAO BARROSO, DECEMBER 2, 2004

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Kyle Scott. Reason: 1.4 (B)
(D)

PARTICIPANTS:

US: DNSA Steven Hadley
Ambassador Schnabel
Elliott Abrams
Dan Fried
Paul Haenle
Mike McKinley, DCM
Kyle Scott (notetaker)

EC: Manuel Barroso, President of European Commission
Joao Vale de Almeida, Chief of Cabinet
Richard Wright, Director for North America, DG
External Relations
Fernando Adnresen Guimaraes, Member of Cabinet (US
Affairs)
Mrs. Francoise Le Bail, Chief Commission Spokesperson
Gunnar Wiegand, DG External Relations (US Affairs)

1. (C) Summary: Barroso said he looked forward to cooperation with the U.S., and has been heartened by President Bush, remarks of his intentions to reach out to Europe in his second term. He pledged to work to ensure the President,s visit in February is a success. Barroso,s goal, to build a Europe that can be America,s counterpart -- but not a counterweight. Europeans want to put the disagreements over Iraq behind them. Barroso urged seeking a positive agenda. The two also discussed ways to move forward on the Middle East peace process and reform in the Broader Middle East, support for and timing of elections in Iraq, and the way forward on Ukraine. DNSA Hadley emphasized the strategic importance of the EU,s December 17 decision on Turkey. End Summary.

Improving US-European Relations

2. (C) DNSA Hadley presented Barroso a letter from President Bush expressing the President,s commitment to working closely with the new Commission on deepening America,s partnership with Europe. Barroso said he fully supported the President,s view, had been heartened by the President,s remarks about reaching out to Europe, and welcomed his Nova Scotia speech on America,s commitment to positive multilateral engagement.

3. (C) Hadley said the President,s remarks were sincere. The President believes the US and Europe have an opportunity to make progress on our common agenda, and that is why he committed to an early trip to Europe. The President is convinced that the US and Europe operate best in the world if we act together; the trip offers an opportunity to strengthen our joint approach to common challenges. Barroso said he looks forward to the visit, and hoped the President would find time to send a clear signal of America,s continuing commitment to European integration. Meetings with NATO heads of state/government and with EU heads of state/government were important, but Barroso suggested a signal in favor of the Commission -- the only European Community institution -- would be welcome. In so doing, he would be continuing the tradition of US statesmen who have consistently supported European integration.

4. (C) Barroso said there is a debate in Europe about whether European institutions should be strengthened in order to create a counterweight to US power in the world. Barroso said he believes this is unwise. Europe should integrate to become a valuable counterpart to the United States, not a counterweight. The fact is that Europe and the US share the same priorities: economic progress, reform in the Broader Middle East, a solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, commitment to non-proliferation and to counter terrorism, and increasingly must also address the issue of a more assertive Russia. The US and Europe have been working together on all these issues, as they have so dramatically in recent days over the crisis in Ukraine.

5. (C) Despite this cooperation, Barroso said there was a

need to create more confidence in US-European relations. Public support is declining, largely as a consequence of the cleavages caused by the debates over Iraq. This is not a clear US vs. Europe issue, he noted, because European public opinion has also been divided on what was the proper approach on Iraq. There is broad agreement, however, that now is the time to put these disagreements behind us. To do so, Barroso suggested the President's visit would be the ideal opportunity to lay out a new, positive agenda. Hadley supported this approach, noting that the President takes comfort in having a friend like Barroso at the helm of the European Commission.

Arab-Israeli Conflict:

16. (C) DNSA Hadley said the President believes there is an enormous opportunity to make progress in the Middle East, and wants to seize it. Elections of a new Palestinian President will be the first key step. The US and Europe need to work in tandem to support the elections process, but this will be only the first step. The President is convinced there is no "short-cut" to peace. After the elections, the new Palestinian democratic leadership will have to develop democratic institutions, improve control of the security situation, and prove that the Palestinian Authority can become a reliable partner for Israel in making peace before moving forward to Final Status Talks.

17. (C) Barroso agreed that the opportunity was at hand, but suggested there was a sense of urgency coming from the region. Regional leaders, such as Jordan, are begging the Commission to do something now. The sooner we start, Barroso stated, the better. Barroso noted that there is a perception in Europe, which he shares, that this unsolved issue is fueling terrorism; if Europe and the West are not seen as honest brokers in seeking a settlement, it offers Islamic extremists more fertile ground for their activities. This can already be seen in Europe's Muslim community. In the short run, we should strive to provide financial and technical support to the Palestinians to make the elections a success and give them the capacity to manage their territories.

Broader Middle East:

18. (C) DNSA Hadley noted that, in addition to the Middle East peace process, there was a broader strategic opportunity to support reform in the Middle East. This reform should not be forced or imposed from the outside, but we should be ready to support the voices from inside the region calling for freedom and democracy. If we can help improve the lives of average citizens in this region, it will also make the US and Europe more secure. He urged Barroso to look for common projects that Europe and the US could support. Barroso pointed to the EU Barcelona Process, which is a long-term, multi-dimensional program that relies on Europe's "soft power approach" to support reform, push for human rights progress, and consolidation of the rule of law. He admitted that it had not been easy in this part of the world, but he shared the President's commitment to freedom. Europe also wants to support this reform process, he vowed.

Iraq:

19. (C) DNSA Hadley said that whatever our past disagreements, all now agree that it is important for Iraq to go well. The consequences of success or failure are enormous for all. The real question is how to ensure success. He noted that although we have made some progress with Europe in moving ahead, Europe does not seem to share our sense of urgency. He asked for Barroso's advice on how the current situation could be improved to achieve more European support. Barroso said that in his confirmation hearing before the European Parliament, he had also stressed the need to forget the past and work for the future on Iraq. This is vitally important for the EU; if Turkey joins, Iraq will become the Union's immediate neighbor.

110. (C) Europeans, Barroso suggested, will do what they can, but the nature of their contribution will differ from country to country: some will provide troops, others will offer debt forgiveness, or support for the UN's security, or technical and financial assistance. European leaders, he believes, understand the need for a common agenda with the US on Iraq.

111. (C) In response to Barroso's question about the election date, DNSA Hadley said the President's position is firm in that the Iraqis should stick to the planned date of January 30. Our experience in Afghanistan showed us that calls to delay don't gain us anything. There is no reason to believe that delaying the elections will improve the security situation, and getting greater Iraqi commitment to running their own affairs can have a positive impact on the situation over time. The preparations are going forward, and the UN is

stepping up its activities in support. The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq is not calling for a delay. The US is increasing its troop strength in Iraq during the election period. In the end, he noted, it is the Iraqis who will make the final call on whether or not to delay the elections.

Ukraine:

12. (C) DNSA Hadley welcomed the cooperation between the US and EU on the unfolding elections crisis in Ukraine, and praised the active diplomacy of Solana and the Polish and Lithuanian presidents in Kiev. The key focus should remain on the democratic process; whatever the outcome of current negotiations, it must reflect the will of the Ukrainian people. Hadley cautioned Russia should not view this in the context of US-EU versus Russia and that it will be important to keep the door open so that Russia can find a way to walk back from its current position. In the end, Russia must be ready to accept a democratic outcome. He also emphasized that if the US and EU's diplomatic efforts yield a positive outcome, we will both have a stake in ensuring the continued success of Ukraine. This may require resources to support the Ukrainian economy.

13. (C) Barroso noted that the European Council would face a decision in the coming days about its Association Plan for Ukraine as part of its larger European Neighborhood Program. Given the uncertainties in Ukraine at the moment, the Council will have to decide whether or not to approve the program for Ukraine. He predicted they would agree to approve the program, but make its implementation dependent on conditions on the ground in Ukraine. If things turn out right, the Action Plan will provide quite generous carrots to Kiev: market access, technical assistance and development funds. It also includes a policy on visa access to EU Member States -- a key incentive to Ukraine, which has a mobile work force. He pointed out that Ukrainians were now the largest foreign community in his native Portugal. Thus, he said the EU had real leverage with what it is prepared to offer, but said the policy will be clear: the quality of Europe's relations with Ukraine will depend on the quality of democracy in the country.

Turkey:

14. (C) DNSA Hadley noted that the US had taken a low-key public approach on Turkey because we realize this is a very sensitive issue for Europe. This quiet stance should not, however, be mistaken for a change in the US position or lack of interest in Europe's decision on Turkish membership. Turkey needs to see a European vocation to continue on its reform track. He emphasized that Turkey had made considerable progress in meeting EU requirements for membership and encouraged Barroso to ensure the bar is not raised for Turkey at the late stage. Barroso responded that the Commission's report clearly supports beginning accession negotiations with Turkey. He believes it will be approved on December 17. There are serious domestic problems in some member states, driven not only by xenophobia, but also by a strain of Euro-federalists who believe Turkish membership would change the very nature of Europe -- making it too big, too diverse, and including a country in which "too much of it is not really in Europe." Unlike previous enlargement debates, which were conducted mainly among European elites, the decision on Turkey is hotly debated by the European man-on-the-street. The Commission favors Turkish accession; Barroso hoped a positive signal would emerge on December 17.

SCHNABEL